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Still no justice for Howard Joel Munroe

Kevin Smith

The black community of Kitchener-Waterloo and many others are outraged at the slow pace of police investigations into the slaying of a young black man by a gang of predominantly white youths.

Twenty-year-old Howard Joel Munroe was beaten and fatally stabbed after being swarmed by a group of up to 50 youths — a group known as the Slingers. The incident occurred just as the Victoria Day fireworks were about to begin in the park. A friend of his, a black teen, was also beaten and stabbed by the gang. His name has not been released, as he is under 18.

A protest was held on June 2 in front of the Frederick Street police station. One of the speakers was Dudley Laws, founder of the Toronto-based Black Action Defence Committee. He said that if racial lines had been reversed in the stabbing, every young black man in the city would have been questioned by police.

Munroe's girlfriend, Sierra Schaffer, who is white, said Munroe was often teased and taunted by the youths because he "was a big tough black guy." She also noted that he had been continually harassed by the Slingers for a year and a half before the incident, because of their inter-racial relationship.

Staff Sgt. Brent Thomlison of the homicide branch of Waterloo regional police said that about a dozen detectives are working on the case, but no one has been arrested in the slaying.

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Ontario Coalition Against Poverty

Unite and fight!

Stuart Duncan

The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) is a grassroots anti-poverty organization that has been fighting for the rights of poor people within Toronto and across the province for over a decade. Their confrontational direct action approach to poverty activism has been successful at winning back support payments, housing rights, citizenship status, and basic human rights for those living within Ontario's societal margins.

OCAP differs from most anti-poverty groups in Ontario in that it fights with people affected by the issues of poverty and exploitation. It moves beyond the advocacy / charitable approach that most poverty organizations take, to win back the rights of those who are constantly marginalized in our society. OCAP works to link similar anti-poverty organizations, the homeless, students, workers and First Nations communities together to fight systems of oppression and exploitation.

With the devastating "leadership" that five years of Mike Harris Tory rule has brought us, the need for a confrontational approach that OCAP is known for is greater than ever. With no social support net, less education and health funding, no rent control or affordable housing, no recognition of First Nation rights, and less government spending on regulatory agencies, we've seen many people die, especially the homeless, and the six residents in Walkerton.

Last June, OCAP marched to Queen's Park, and demanded that the province's poor be allowed to address the legislature. When the request of the thousand people gathered outside was denied, the police attacked the marchers and the protesters fought back against a level of police repression unprecedented in Toronto. The action at Queen's park led to injuries and arrests of dozens of protesters and many OCAP organizers and supporters face lengthy legal battles ahead.

OCAP has built on this momentum, and has issued a call for a widespread campaign of economic disruption in the fall to remove Mike Harris and the Conservative government from power. In order to kickstart this campaign, OCAP staged a mock eviction at Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's constituency office, in which his furniture was moved into the street.

Everyday, more and more groups within

.. continued on page 4

Between the covers

Howard Joel Munroe poem
Racism
Global Awareness Camp
Zehr's stores face boycott over GMOs
Pride picnic
'Protest-simulator' video game gets violent
Cuba x 3
Education x 2
Starbucks out, fair trade in
Youth Collective drop-in centre opens
Hamilton War Show a no-go

Howard Joel Munroe poem

Florica Hoxha

Hurray, hurray!
It's Multicultural Day!

Last month in this field,
A black youth was killed,
Another was stabbed,
No killer was nabbed.

White bandanas,knives for toys,
They are white, and
"good young boys".
Who's the leader? Never know.
Just shut up; he'll kill you so.

"Hurray, hurray!
It's Multicultural Day!
Black and white,
all youth together
Rain or shine or any weather
Let's forget the boy who's dead,
We should look just
straight ahead.
All is well, why don't you see?"
Next to die, it's you or me,
For the Slingers' victory.

Hurray, hurray!
It's Multicultural Day!
Just come to the Park,
The gang waits in the dark
To beat and to kill
Now safer they feel.

Hurray, hurray!
It's multicultural day!
Drink, eat, and forget
The black who is dead!

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K-W IMC and Blind Spot are always looking for feedback, volunteers, and/or financial donations. Contact us at (519) 244-1140 or *ontario@indymedia.org*

Racist killing in Victoria Park

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"They don't really have an ideology, so you can't say they're like the skinheads where their main purpose is to promote that segregation and separation," says Staff Sgt. Gary Askin of the Waterloo regional police intelligence branch. "They're like other gangs. Their main purpose is to make money by way of committing crimes."

Whatever the outcome of this investigation, this incident highlights the fact that racism still thrives within our community, both in organized racist groups, and in the racist attitudes of individuals. Anti-racist activists call on community members to examine their own racist attitudes, and to speak out against racism whenever they can.

Reflections of racism

excerpted from the Toronto Star, June 22

"But I do not wish to have essential sanitation services, clean drinking water, adequate education or access to lands and resources provided as some kind of a gift or privilege for First Nations people. These are our rights, our treaty, constitutional and human rights! We have been deprived of these things." *— National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations*

Matthew Coon Come

"What the hell do I want to go to a place like Mombasa (Kenya)? Snakes just scare the hell out of me. I'm sort of scared about going there, but the wife is really nervous. I just see myself in a pot of boiling water with all these natives dancing around me." *— Toronto mayor*

Mel Lastman

"Israel remains the only isolated island of democracy, human rights and rule of law — a lonely outpost of Western civilization and its values in a sea of terrorism, corruption, dictatorship and human enslavement." *— CEO of CanWest Global media conglomerate*

Israel "Izzy" Asper

Fighting racism with education

Krista Lord and
Joel Regehr

A major problem not only in K-W, but nation-wide is how we can effectively implement anti-racism education for our children and youth. With years of multicultural education behind us and our communities still gripped by the oppressive power of racism, we continue to grasp for an effective way of taking on the force of racism in our communities. We are excited about the opportunity of addressing racism in our community this summer through the Global Awareness Camp, yet we find the task daunting to say the least.

In the 1970's and 1980's lots of money and resources were put towards addressing the problem of racism. With multiculturalism firmly established in our education system many would have us believe racism is no longer a problem. Recently, a school invited us to lead workshops with their students; however, they asked for us to focus on the environment or conflict education. Despite the undercurrents of racism that exist in Canada, we were told that their school is free of racism. This was not an isolated incident and numerous other schools and community centres have displayed similar reluctance.

In an atmosphere of denial, using words like racism and white-privilege can be taken as more offensive than the racism such words attempt to identify. How then, do we confront the racism inherent in our culture and in ourselves? Most programs that do address racism in the community tend to focus primarily on celebrating the diversity in our community. While celebrating does increase awareness and comfort levels around the diversity in our community, it does not necessarily give people the tools to directly challenge systemic racism.

This summer we intend to engage children and youth ages 9-17 in activities and discussion around racism. We hope to work together to empower each other to critically

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Consumers boycotting Loblaw's and Zehr's over GMO-free labeling issues

Kevin Smith

Loblaw's recently informed their suppliers that their products will be pulled from the shelves unless "GMO-free" labels have been removed from them. Organic farmers use the labels to tell consumers that they don't use food products that have been genetically modified.

Zehr's, GMOs — bad. Organic farmers, democratic freedom, vigorous protest — good.

Loblaw's says the ban was put into place because there are no clear standards set for GMO-free foods. Critics say that this move is both unethical and irresponsible, showing little respect for the concerns of their customers, and what they're eating.

"Given the standards that organic products must meet in order to be certified within that industry, as compared with the relatively unregulated products that line most of your shelves, it would seem that the move is merely meant to limit competition for your larger suppliers, who have a stake in the biotechnology industry," says a draft complaint letter that is being circulated.

"To be certified organic, a product must be approved by a third party organization like Quality Assurance International and must meet the conditions of the California Organic Foods Act of 1990 — the de facto standard for organic certification. Regardless of Health Canada's apparent unwillingness to move on the creation of firm guidelines for the health food industry, these products still undergo far more rigorous scrutiny than any of the non-certified products on your shelves that merely meet the minimum standards of Health Canada or the FDA. As such, the consumer can rest assured that the "organic" or "GMO-free" product is a safe and healthy one, free of pesticides and genetically modified organisms of [unproven] safety and value."

"By contrast, a great many of the products on your stores' shelves contain known carcinogens (cancer causing agents including BHA/BHT and pesticide residues), petrochemical derivatives (numerous artificial flavours and colours) and aspartame (known to cause neurological damage, methanol toxicity, tumours, hypertension), among others. Yet the suppliers of these dangerous or nutritionally bereft products are not required by Loblaw Companies to warn the consumer of any risks associated with their ingredients."

David Seljak of Kitchener-Waterloo is very unhappy with this policy. "I myself will be switching from Zehr's to Sobey's until this policy is withdrawn."

Global Awareness Camp

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analyse the issue of racism. Working with a variety of groups, we struggle with finding a method that would best suit the different contexts and experiences found in each group. How do we talk about racism with children and youth, while giving them a sense of agency in the world? Our goal is to welcome the community in this process. We urge you to offer any suggestions that might be beneficial to our program. Or if you have any questions or would like some information on anti-racism resources, please e-mail us at *globalawarenesscamp@yahoo.ca*.

The Global Awareness Camp is an initiative sponsored by the Multicultural Centre, Paradox Theatre Company, WPIRG, and the Working Centre. The camp is for children and youth ages 9-15 and will take place in August at the Working Centre with four, one-week sessions. If you have any questions or would like to register please leave a message at our community mailbox 749-0720 ext 459

Pride 2001
Imagine — be a dreamer

A.J. Mahari

Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride held its seventh annual Gay Pride Celebration on Saturday June 9th, on Roos Island, in Kitchener's Victoria Park.

A record crowd of over 700 people attended what was this region's most successful pride day ever. This year's event marked the first time that our local Pride Day had vendors to compliment the usual information tables. There was a total of 10 vendors. Goods and services included paintings, candles, pride paraphernalia, books, novelty items, clothes and jewelry.

Pride is a celebration of what it means to be lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgendered. It is an opportunity to feel a strong sense of community and to learn more about all the groups, agencies and business that make up that community.

It is an opportunity to network and have a good time. This year's event also boasted the most balanced entertainment line-up in our local Pride History. The entertainers included Nancy Rancourt, 3 Drag Queens, Chris Edwards, Drew and Candance, plus Removable Red, a DJ and KoolFm Radio.

As great a success as this day was there was also some controversy. One Drag Queen was warned by the a city official about the use of profane language in one sound track. Another Drag Queen had her performance stopped by organizers at the request of the city official due to the fact that an audience member dancing with her pulled his pants down exposing a naked backside. Both incidents violated the city's behaviour code for a public place.

Many in the gay community viewed this year's event as being more of a family picnic. This reflects the ever-evolving reality of gay culture. Some Pride participants were deeply offended by four minutes of the entertainment. Conversely, many in attendance found those two numbers to be very exciting and extremely entertaining.

Diversity is alive and well in our local gay community. Officials at Kitchener City Hall are being most understanding and are working with event organizers to address any remaining concerns. Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride has a lot to build upon. Our community continues to etch out an increasing amount of visibility and acceptance.

State of Emergency in video game land

Rockstar Games set to release a protest-simulation game

Greg Macdougall

There's a war going on over the corporatization of the globe. Not only in the streets at event protests against the WTO, IMF, World Bank, or FTAA, but everywhere, all the time. You can't ever let your guard down, 'cause you don't know where or when the next attack will come.

That's you, the corporations, as people pull together to shut you down. But that's also you, the people, as the politicians and police and corporations all work together to keep you down, isolated and quiet. The latest reports out of Sweden add real live nine-mm bullets to the growing list of oppressive tactics used on protesters.

While the war is raging on the streets, its also being fought in people's minds. The mass media have an unhealthy ability to filter, screen, and shape people's world view. The latest battle ground may come as a bit of a surprise — a Sony Playstation 2. The game is called State of Emergency, is being put out by a NY video game company, Rockstar, and is set for October release.

It gives you the opportunity to live out your dreams of violent protesting, against the ficticious "ATO" — American Trade Organization. As they declare a state of emergency and send in the troops, your job is to riot. As violently as possible. You even get weapons — grenades, shotguns, machine guns ... the usual. Plus flame throwers, rocket launchers and anything you happen to find in the streets, including dismembered body parts.

There's two play modes: 'progressive' entails completing specified missions; 'freestyle' is all about just roaming around and wrecking stuff.

There's a number of different takes to be had on this game. One, it encourages violence. Just like all other violent video games, it could serve to desensitize game players (younger people) to injurious acts. Secondly, as some people opposed to protesting have warned, it may persuade people to become violent protestors.

More important is that this game simply serves to further incalculate the 'truth' that these protests against the ATO/WTO are more about the violence than the issues. That the protests are about police using their power to keep dangerous people from creating too much havoc.

This video game serves to obscure and hide the real 'truth' that what the protests are about is people who are trying to be part of a democratic process.

The worst thing of all, is that the game is "simply incredible," according to previews. You can check the on-line demo at: www.rockstargames.com/uploads/SOE_gameplay.mov

Once the police have got you down, it's game over.

OCAP: Unite and fight

.. continued from page 1

Ontario are undertaking plans to partake in this campaign. A meeting was organized on the anniversary of the June 15 action to plan for this. Unfortunately, many of the OCAP organizers were arrested before this meeting, mostly as a result of the Flaherty action.

The message seems to be that to get the attention of the powers in control of the province that we have to change our tactics. We have to be confrontational. We can no longer be passive in our resistance. We have to fight to win.

Democracy in Cuba

Kevin Smith

A lot of interest has been focused on the small Caribbean island of Cuba lately, due to its exclusion from the Quebec City Summit in April. Summit attendees proudly flaunt their own democratic records, while wagging their fingers at Cuba. The reality, though, is that Cuba has a form of democracy as well.

Citizens belong to local councils, which in turn choose representatives for regional councils, and so on, up to the national level. Fidel has enjoyed popularity in his own neighbourhood and throughout the country, so he is still in power. If things are going along as well as can be expected, a major challenger is not going to upset him. We see the same thing in Canada, where certain mayors and union heads hold leadership roles for a long time.

Some will argue that without political parties and their competing ideologies, real democracy can't exist. Let's get real. The major political parties in this country are indistinguishable, since they get their funding from the same source — large corporations — and the agenda (as set by the Business Council on National Issues) is pretty clear.

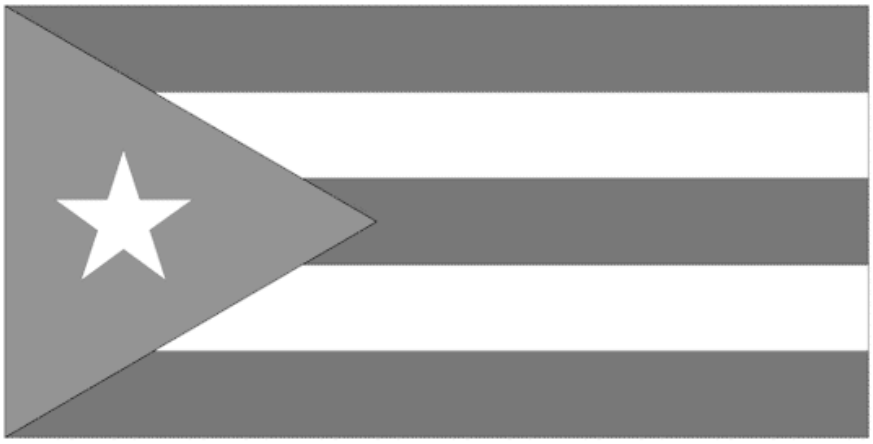
Despite being snubbed by the FTAA folk, Cuba continues the global cooperation for which it is known. Some companies do business in Cuba on Cuba's terms, and their overseas medical education programs are expanding. Even some Americans are training for medicine in Cuba. Like any country, Cuba has problems, but they're doing the best they can, given their circumstances, which are much better than the FTAA partners in the region.

Cuba: A land under siege

Julian Ichim and
Akmed Jihad Mojahadin

Cuba is a country under siege. Since the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959, the United States of America has been fighting a war against Cuban independence, both openly and secretly. This war has cost Cuba billions of dollars in economic damages and has taken the form of assassinations, biological warfare, the dropping of incendiary devices over crop fields, kidnapping of hundreds of children after the revolution, and out and out military invasion, as was seen during the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

The United States government, through connections abroad and with the help of the CIA, is sponsoring acts of terrorism committed by such "dissident" groups as Brothers To The Rescue, and the Cuban American National Foundation, giving these Batista loyalists millions of dollars of support as well as equipment and military training. Some examples of violations of international law linked with the above-mentioned groups include the violation of Cuban airspace, the dropping of anti-Cuban literature from aircraft, sponsoring of armed bandit groups such as Alpha 66 with weapons to carry out assassinations and terror in Cuba, as well as the recent attempt on Fidel Castro's life in Panama.



Enemies of the Cuban revolution are quick to say that there is no freedom of speech in Cuba and that Cuba is a dictatorship. Despite the fact that Cuban films such as, *Guantanamera*, *Chocolates and Strawberries*, and *The Death of a Bureaucrat* are highly critical of policies followed by the Cuban government, despite all the literature published within Cuba that can be deemed political criticism, the US monopoly-owned media would have us believe that Cuba is a country suffering from literal poverty, where artists are brutally silenced and those who criticize the government in any way are swiftly punished.

By promoting such untruths within the media, US special interests are expanding the war against Cuba and taking the battle to another level. This is an attempt to further isolate the people of Cuba from the people of the world and an attempt to demonize a people whom rose up in arms for their liberty. In Cuba's resistance, American monopolies see a great threat. These people have long served as symbols of resistance to the masses of Latin America. It is for this reason that we cannot allow ourselves to be swayed by the right-wing propaganda against Cuba and must attempt to find out the truth about Cuba for ourselves. For more information about Cuba, visit Cuba.

Don't judge Cuba by U.S. values

Nathaniel Anderson

The United States and other countries have been very critical of Cuba on the grounds that the revolutionary government is undemocratic. This was the reason given for excluding them from the Summit of the Americas negotiations in April 2000. However, if you want to take an honest look at a country's democracy and human rights, you need to look at the historical context and day-to-day reality of people's lives in Cuba.

Before 1959, Cuba was named the "whore of the West Indies." Havana was a city of sin run by American gangsters and business elites. The native population of the country suffered some of the worst living conditions in the Western world. Fulgencio Batista, a brutal dictator and tyrant, mainly looked after himself, and the foreign, mainly American business elites which backed him. When Castro seized power, one of his first moves was to give back to the people the land that had been stolen first by Spanish, then American, capitalist imperialists. We may talk now of freedom, but the situation prior to the revolution for the majority of Cubans was an unbearable situation — far worse, it would seem, than the lack of political freedoms they are faced with today.

When I spoke to a retired factory worker in Havana, he told me "before the revolution we had nothing, now we have food to eat, schools for our children, and free education." Many Cubans of the younger generation, most of whom have no memory of the treacherous social conditions prevalent before the revolution, have mixed feelings about the future of Socialism. They often refer to Castro in a sarcastic tone as "Grandpa Fidel" with feelings of resentment from being denied the fruits of economic prosperity which the tourists enjoy. Almost invariably the refrain of "Los Viejos," the old ones, is that the typical Cuban owes everything they DO have to the revolution.

Instead of comparing Cuba to the U.S., and its style of 'democracy' and prosperity, a better way to judge the success or failure of 'the Cuban socialist experiment' is to look at its 'democratic' Caribbean neighbours, like Haiti and Dominican Republic, both of which have abominable social and political conditions, but are welcomed into international agreements like the FTAA along with brutal governments like that of Colombia.

Freedom is a battle that cannot be won by a symbolic tick on a ballot … it is an ideal for which we must fight vigorously, guided by the need for compassion and justice, and standing strong in the face of economic systemic violence. Cuba has done this, Fidel has done this, and neither are perfect, but alas, neither are the governments who condemn them.

Crisis in education is real

Alan Rimmer

Since 1969, when the government under took a merger of many small school boards across Ontario to create larger boards, there has been a growing harmony of interests between the educational bureaucracy, elected trustees and provincial and federal politics. For many trustees in Waterloo county, being on a school board is just the first step in a career in politics.

Trustees in Waterloo County, as elsewhere, have the power to make a big difference in the lives of children if they are prepared to use the power they have. The first task is to recognize that the officials of the board work for the trustees, not vice versa. But for those trustees who are new to the job, they are fair game to promote the agenda of board officials and not the agenda of the people who elected them.

One of the first acts of the newly elected Conservative government of Mike Harris in 1995, was to order the creation of School Councils in every school in Ontario. These councils, which were to made up primarily of parents, were to make recommendations to the local school board on such things as the appointment of school principals, changes to curriculum and more.

In Waterloo County, School Councils have been ignored as board officials makes decisions even before parents have had a chance to consider a question. There was no solicitation of parent opinion on the curtailment of Outdoor Education*** or of Design and Technology, despite the fact that these programs are highly valued by parents and children.

The curriculum of the boards is being reduced to the 3 R's — readin', 'ritin' and 'ritmetic — because these are the subjects mandated by the Ministry of Education. The board, however, could enhance the quality of programs in schools by putting a freeze on salary increases until after the next provincial election and by drawing away millions of dollars paid to board officials and school Principals. Such moves by the trustees would require unusual courage but would be applauded by both parents and children whose needs in schools might again be met.

*** The Waterloo Region District School Board has proposed eliminating its outdoor education programs and closing the centres it owns because of insufficient financing from the province. The province has passed a law prohibiting school boards from budgeting for a deficit, and deficits that do occur in annual operations have to be erased before their money can be allocated to any other needs. Trustees who attempt to defy these rules can now be charged and jailed if convicted.

Educational propaganda

Greg Macdougall

I received a letter from the Premier of Ontario recently, which included a copy of the government's booklet "21 Steps Into the 21st Century." Some of it had to do with education.

"We have already introduced a rigorous curriculum, clear report cards and standardized testing — and we've invested more money into the classroom." This is what the government boasts of having accomplished in their 6 years of power. Quite an accomplishment?

Introducing a rigorous curriculum only means that what a student learns in their educational journey is now more in line with what everyone else learns. The more rigorous the curriculum, the less rigorous the learning outside the curriculum. The government has effectively taken more control over what students learn instead of leaving that decision up to the qualified people (i.e. teachers) — in effect they have standardized what people learn.

Clear report cards? Not that this is bad, but I would place more emphasis on things like, well, learning and less on things like assigning a subjective score on something that might develop better unlabelled, even if it is now more clear.

More money in the classroom. The Harris government can say that, but a better description would be, 'less money in the schools.' However the Harris government does the spin math, they've taken money out of the system. Maybe they can say they've invested in the classroom, but what about out-of-class resources, that help both teachers and students? The infrastructure of the school that serves the entire school community has been severely affected by the changes, and that has affected all the students. A lot of people in the schools (students and teachers) don't want to be there anymore.

"We will give parents more choice to enrol their children in any available school within their system." This, despite Harris promising in a pre-election debate to not divert support away from the public system. Which the $3500 tax credit scheme does, to an estimated tune of $300 million in lost taxes.

"We will introduce performance-based accountability to our schools." Test the heck out of the students and the teachers, and eventually they'll start learning to 'test' well, the test results will go up, and we'll be "improving" our education system. Try not to think of the word 'accountability' when you compare what Harris said about supporting private schools before the election to what he's done since.

"Recent test results prove that there remains much room for improvement." Are these the first round of results from a hastily-envisioned, even more sloppily-imposed overhaul of the curriculum and a compulsion to go heavy on testing? But, they are "proof."

How does this government plan to ensure teachers "have the up to date knowledge and skills they need to help students reach their full potential?" Not by helping to provide better professional development opportunities. Instead, this government wants to test teachers on how well they teach. The job of a teacher is best measured by looking at how well the students are learning. To test how a teacher teaches, minus the students, doesn't make a whole lot of sense.

"The government will require that schools provide students who are falling behind the extra support they need to catch up." Too bad no one can require the government to provide schools enough money to take care of the special needs of various students.

There are plans to develop "an action plan to recruit the finest candidates to the teaching profession in Ontario." Perhaps the first step would be to stop the fighting, demoralizing, and degrading of the teaching profession that the Harris government has been so keen at the past six years.

But who am I to say? An almost-graduated teacher candidate, ready to become a certified teacher in Ontario but not ready to step into a full-time public teaching job in Ontario. Not with the teaching conditions that this government has created in our schools. Sorry, but the action plan should be addressed at the problems in the schools, not at me.

Maybe sometime the government will think to ask teachers what kinds of changes are needed, instead of telling them. Maybe then they'll get answers that might work.

Starbucks ousted in favour of fair trade

Melissa Stephens

Bookends Coffee Shop, located in South Campus Hall at the University of Waterloo, has changed their business practices. As of May 28 2001, the establishment stopped serving Starbucks coffee and now serves coffee provided by the Baden Coffee Company. This change means that Bookends now serves an Organic, Fair Trade blend. Mark Murdoch of UW Food Services says there are several reasons for terminating the contract with Starbucks. Customers complained about the flavour intensity and high cost that came with the Starbucks label. The Baden Coffee Company roasts and blends its own beans to provide a richer, more consistent flavour profile for customers. While Fair Trade is generally more expensive wholesale and even a few cents more (per cup), Murdoch seems confident that the store can absorb the cost and Bookends has actually lowered its prices for customers. While he denied that "pressure groups" contributed to the switch, Murdoch did say that Bookends should appeal to a wider range of customers by serving Fair Trade coffee. Lower prices, flavour consistency and Fair Trade have apparently generated a positive response from customers.

To be sure, Baden Coffee is certified under Transfair Canada as a distributer of Fair Trade Coffee. Transfair is "the only 3rd party independent fair trade certification organization in Canada." Having Transfair certification guarantees that small farmers are receiving "a fair price, credit at reasonable rates of interest, and longer term sales contracts."

Why Fair Trade? Transfair reports that one third of the world's coffee producers are small farmers who earn "no more than ten per cent of the retail price" for their own coffee. Coffee barons, middlemen, multinationals, grocery stores and coffee shops all contribute to the giant "food chain" which severs the direct relationship farmers have with their product. Not only does fair trade guarantee a minimum price for the coffee farmers produce, but it reduces the middlemen, encourages direct trade, and enables farmers to pursue "social and ecological development projects such as organic or shade grown coffee which is healthier for the environment, workers, and consumers, produces higher quality beans".

One in five is now fair trade at UW bookstore.

This arrangement establishes long-term trade relationships which provides the farmers greater security.

Fair Trade coffee is still difficult to find in a city full of big chain stores, but perhaps as customers show a greater interest in fair trading practices, its availability will improve and so will the lives of the farmers who produce it.

Some local providers of Fair Trade Coffee are: Muses Cafe; The Old Kitchen Cupboard; The Raintree Cafe; Ten Thousand Villages; UW Bookends Coffee Shop; UW Environmental Studies Coffee Shop; VIVA! Juice Bar.

Please see www.transfair.ca for sources and further information about Fair Trade.

Whose space? Our space!

Youth Collective drop-in centre opens

Julian Ichim

On June 1st 2001, The K-W Youth Collective brought closure to the three year struggle in downtown Kitchener for youth space by opening The Spot, a youth run drop in centre. Located at 119-B King St. West in downtown Kitchener, The Spot aims to empower youth by giving them a space to call there own, as well as giving youth a framework in which they can make decisions and run a space autonomously. The Spot offers young people, as well as youth friendly community groups resourses such as computer and internet access, a growing library, a space to meet and community outreach programs.

The idea of such a space for young people in the downtown began in the summer of 1998 with the formation of the KW Youth Collective, a youth based advocacy group. First stated as one of ten demands that the youth were voicing,the demand for the drop-in centre gained a life of its own and soon the KWYC began making presentations to city council and other such bodies of authorities to gain economic and physical assistance to start such a place.

Based on the idea that if young people and the established downtown community can not get long then it would be mutually benificial for young people to have a place to go and hang out, the KWYC wrote the first proposal for the drop-in centre which emphasied the need for youth space in the downtown community. After meeting with local politicians, representatives of the regional police and members of the downtown community the KWYC readjusted their proposal to meet the needs of those whom it hoped to attract for help. However, after exhausting "acceptable" bureacratic means of gaining assistance the KWYC began mounting pressure through public demonstrations to show the necessity of such a place and soon began going to the public for economic support. As of today the KWYC has raised over $10 000 start up funds to run the space which is open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 3-11.

Contact the KWYC at 220-2159 or *youth_space@hotmail.com*

.. continued from page 8

Another highlight of the weekend was the Melon-Cauli soldiers, who were dressed in hats made out of watermelon and pineapple rinds, with eggplant/carrot rifles, and lime juice grenades.

The second day started off the same as the first, with a Festival of Life at the main entrance. The early part of this action included people walking and meditating, which made police intelligence scratch their heads. Later, participants entered the show, and held prayer vigils and leafletted beside both the F-16s and the "Kiddie Commando." Although police were somewhat intimidating, no arrests were made.

Organizers were happy with the event, and promise to return next year, to encourage the kiddies and others to "study war no more."

Festival of Life outshines Warplane Show in Hamilton

Kevin Smith

Each Father's Day weekend, thousands are drawn to Hamilton, Ontario to see air and ground displays of the most deadly war planes in existence. Though the organizers call it an Air Show, critics say that with the overwhelming number of warplanes, and with events like "Kiddie Commando," it is more of a War Show. While social services in Hamilton suffer cutbacks, this show receives $100,000 in tax dollars each year, and is registered as a charitable organization.

Go fly a kite ... or a death machine.

On June 16th and 17th, Homes Not Bombs and the Father's Day Coalition for Peace held a Festival of Life and performed Non-Violent Direct Action to show their strong opposition to the militarism that this annual Hamilton Air/War Show promotes.

Throughout the weekend, thousands of leaflets were handed out to attendees both outside and inside the show without drawing a response from the police. Many musical acts like the Raging Grannies, and interesting characters like the Grinch (who had a change of heart) were on hand to spread the word about the war planes and Kiddie Commando, recommending other festivals to go to, including the Pride Day in downtown Hamilton, and a music festival in Burlington.

"Kiddie Commando" — a nice family outing.

.. continued on page 7

Ontario.indymedia.org clips
Selected stories from June's postings

Swedish anti-Bush protests erupt
ID# 1069

Reports of Swedish police using dogs, horses, batons, whips, automatic weapons and real live ammo on protesters. Reports of Swedish police undercover as protesters being the first to throw stones.

Mainstream media coverage of OCAP
ID# 1044

How the Sun Media Corporation has skewed coverage of OCAP's struggles to fight against poverty.Did you know that 30 years ago, 40% of publications were independent? Versus today, at 4%. Four corporations control 90% of Canada's newspaper circulation.

OCAP Press Release on Jim Flaherty eviction
ID# 988

US prosecutors seek to deny Mumia Abu-Jamal fair representation — ID# 968

News media ignore lawsuit wins against cigarette companies — ID# 966

CUPE ready to get tough on Harris - ID# 937

Activist Calendar

Tues. July 3, 7:00 PM
K-W Independent Media Centre General Meeting
43 Queen St. S.

Wed. July 4, 5:00 pm
WPIRG General Meeting
Students and other members welcome
Constitutional amendments to ensure a due process for future funding challenges.

Fri. July 6, 8:00 PM
RAISE YOUR FISTS ... A NIGHT OF MADNESS
FEATURING: DJ Finstah, JP Bell, Donovan, and special guests — $5 cover charge
"The Spot" (K-W Youth Resource Centre)
119-B King St. W., downtown Kitchener

Wed. July 11, 7:00 pm
Anti-FTAA community meeting — Local campaign to get local governments to oppose Free Trade Area of the Americas, and to raise awareness.
Adult Recreation Centre, 185 King St. S., Waterloo (corner of King and Allen).

Wed. July 25, 5:00 pm
Critical Mass bike ride
Meet at the corner of Seagram and University (across from UW main entrance)

Wednesday, July 25, 7:30pm
K-W Ontario Coalition Against Poverty Meeting at K-W Youth Resource Centre, 119-B King St. W. Kitchener, upstairs at the back.

Tues. August 7, 7:00 PM
K-W Independent Media Centre General Meeting
43 Queen St. S.

Wed. August 29, 5:00 pm
Critical Mass bike ride
Meet at the corner of Seagram and University (across from UW main entrance)

Wed. August 29, 7:30pm
K-W Ontario Coalition Against Poverty Meeting at K-W Youth Resource Centre, 119-B King St. W. Kitchener, upstairs at the back.

Tues. October 16
Provincewide Economic Disruption Campaign against Ontario Tory government
*See **ontario.indymedia.org** for details.*

BlindSpot is made available at many locations throughout the K-W area. An effort is made to ensure copies are always available at: WPIRG (University of Waterloo Student Life Centre, 2nd Floor); The Working Centre (43 Queen St S, Kitchener); Moody Blues Book Cafe (68 Regina St N, Waterloo); K W Bookstore (306 King St W, Kitchener); and Old Goat Books (99 King St N, Waterloo).

Please help keep this paper alive — pass it on when you're through with it. Thanks.